

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

VOL. XXI. No. 9.] LONDON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 1812. [Price 1s.

" Let our great acts superior merit prove,
" And vindicate the bounteous Powers above.
" 'Tis ours the dignity they give to grace ;
" The first in valour, as the first in place."

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No. II.

THE "NEW ERA."

In my last I endeavoured to shew, that, if the "New Era" failed to prove favourable to the interests of the nation, the failure would be to be attributed to the pride of the great Whig Lords and Commons. The more I reflect on the matter the stronger does my conviction of the truth of this opinion become. What will be the conduct of the party here spoken of it is impossible for me to say; but, I deem myself fully competent to foretell how any attempts to get into power, *except upon popular grounds*, will operate.

If the party, now thrown aside by the Prince, seeing that there is no way in which they can make themselves heard; no way in which they can give weight to their remonstrances, other than that of espousing the cause of the people, and of giving a pledge of their sincerity by bringing forward or supporting the great question of PARLIAMENTARY REFORM; if the party, seeing this, resolve to take the side of the people, and to give this pledge of their being in earnest; then they will become truly formidable to the ministry; they will be able to do great good; and must finally succeed in their object. There would, in such case, be a new spirit infused into the country; a lively hope would supplant that lethargic discontent which now pervades the great mass of the community; confidence between the people and their natural leaders would be, in some measure, restored; and we might look forward to safe and happy times; times when the *dangers* of the country should cease to be rung in our ears along with boasts of its glories and prosperity.

But, if this party indulge the hope of getting into power by other means, by the means of intrigues, or of the combinations of party, independent of the people, they will never succeed; because, the ministers will stand as well with the peo-

ple as they will, and because the Whigs being excluded from all chance of power, will daily lose some of the partizans who now swell their ranks.

If the sense of the people is with the ministry, the ministry ought to remain; and, if it is not, the contrary ought to be *expressed* by the people. But, how are the people to be prevailed upon to *express* themselves in this way? Not by merely calling them together and proposing to them an Address or Petition for the *removal of the ministers*. This would not succeed in any county or any considerable town in the whole kingdom; for, the people stand no longer in need of being told, that *a mere change of men* would do them no good; but, on the contrary, they know, that such change would do them great harm, as they have invariably seen, that a change of this sort is always attended with a large addition to their burdens in the shape of pensions and sinecures.

This is the true cause of that "*apathy*," of which the Whigs have so long and so bitterly complained. They have spoken of the people in the most angry terms because they will not *stir*; but, they seem to have forgotten, that they have never condescended to hold out to the people any thing as an object to make them stir; any motive for stirring. They have talked loosely against the measures of the ministers; they have railed against their intolerance and their ruinous system. But, these are expressions of too general import; of too indefinite a meaning to *bind* those that use them; and, of course, they are not calculated to inspire confidence in those to whom they are addressed.

The people, or, at least, all that part of them who have not an interest in supporting the present ministers, wish for a *change of system*; and, when they talk of a change of system, it is not a change in foreign policy that they mean so much as a change in things that more immediately

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affect them in their liberties and properties. The Catholic question is a matter of great public interest; but, that *alone* will never induce the people of England, or of Ireland, to call for a change of ministry. It is a Reform of the Parliament that the people want; and, for a reason of which it is utterly impossible for any man to deny the solidity.

Let us suppose, for instance, a county meeting called in any part of the kingdom, and a Whig orator rising up and proposing a set of resolutions, as the ground of a petition or remonstrance. He would, doubtless, in such resolutions, state the grievances of the country; he would complain of the injudicious plan of warfare in Spain and Portugal; of the monstrous expenditure in Sicily; of the immense sums expended in the conquests of distant and useless possessions; of the pertinacious adherence to the Orders in Council; of the coming war with America and the consequent ruin of so many merchants and manufacturers; and of the non-repeal of the laws against the Catholics. Having stated all these grievances, he would propose, as a remedy, the removal of the ministers. But, would not he be answered by a statement, that all these things, of which he complained, **HAD BEEN APPROVED OF BY THE HOUSE OF COMMONS**; and, would he not be told, that it was not *the ministry*, who ought to be blamed, because the ministry had all along acted with the sanction of that House? Would he not be told, that, if it was true, that the nation's money had been wasted in useless enterprises, it had been so wasted with the consent of the House of Commons? What *reply* could he make to this? Would he say, that the majority who supported the ministry were not to be regarded as speaking the free voice of the people: if so, the rejoinder would naturally be: give us, then, *a reform of that House*.

When the Whigs were put out, they were put out by *the voice of a majority of the House of Commons*. They talked about *intrigues* and about *misrepresentations* and about the cry of *no popery*; but, what would all these have availed, if they had had a majority of the House of Commons in their favour? If they had had this majority on their side, they would have laughed at all the intrigues and all the other acts of their opponents. There is an old idea amongst them of "*an influence behind the throne greater than the throne itself*;" but, what would this avail against

a majority in the House of Commons, who can, at any time, give or withhold the supplies, and who, consequently, have it always in their power to cherish or to destroy such an influence.

The short way of reasoning with any man, who complains of the ministry, is this: do you look upon the House of Commons, as now constituted, to be a fair representation of the people? If he say, YES, then the answer is, that the House of Commons having approved of all the measures of the ministers, he ought to consider the measures as having been approved of by the people, to whom, therefore, he ought not to appeal against the ministers. If he say, NO, then the answer is, that the House of Commons ought to be reformed; that *that* is the point to begin at; and that, if he refuse to begin there, he cannot be regarded in any other light than that of a man who is seeking to get possession of a share of the power and emoluments of the state, without any desire to better the lot of the people.

Upon this ground it is, that the people ought to demand, and that they *will* demand a pledge to some specific measure of reform of parliament, from those who may call upon them to move against the ministers, in any way, or under any pretence whatever. There are people enough, counties and cities and great towns enough ready to move on the subject of the war with America and on that of the Catholic Claims, both of which are so big with dangers to the country; but, there will be very few prevailed on to move even on these subjects, unless to them is joined the subject of parliamentary reform; and this the Whigs will find to their mortification, if they attempt to separate the *grievance* from the *remedy*; if they attempt to call forth a reprobation of the *effect* without any allusion to the real and notorious *cause*. The present is an occasion for Meetings in London, Westminster, Middlesex, Southwark, comprising an eighth part of non-pauper and resident population of Great Britain; but, what would those meetings produce? Resolutions and Remonstrances against the ministers and their measures perhaps; but, these must be accompanied with others for Reform, or else *divisions* will take place; and, in fact, the Meetings will do the party harm rather than good. Their friends at those Meetings would have to answer those persons who were for Reform; Debates would take place; the former professions of the

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Whigs would be brought into view; their present objects would be questioned; and thus the ministers would derive benefit from what would have been intended for their annoyance.

And, what could the Whigs oppose to the arguments in favour of Reform? The time? Oh, no! that would never do; for, besides that it is an objection which is worn out, they would be told that "*a new era is now arrived.*" And they would be asked when the time would come, if this was *not* the time. If they urged their want of power, the answer would be, that, if they wanted the power to accomplish the object, they could not want the power to pledge themselves to do it as soon as they could, and to support it whenever it should be moved. There would be no excuse, and they must pledge themselves, or they must be content to see public Meetings lump them along with those whom they would desire to see reprobated and hooted by the people.

There may be some persons amongst the Whigs, who hope still to carry on the game of party, unconnected with the people; who hope to keep up a war against the ministers 'till some great national calamity shall produce a change. But, if this were to happen, it would not answer their purposes; for, that same national calamity which would be powerful enough to force the ministers from their places, would, I warrant it, be powerful enough to produce a parliamentary reform; and, if the reform proceeded from this cause, it is pretty evident, that it would bring forward a set of men now unknown to the public, and, perhaps, it would totally overwhelm those who might now, if they chose, take a lead in reform, and thereby render their influence of long duration.

If Mr. Perceval be so powerful now, whose fault is it but that of the Whigs themselves? When Sir Francis Burdett, in a contest against this minister's power, had his house surrounded, was finally dragged out of it, and was sent to prison; what did the Whigs do? Did they not rally round the minister; were they not the first to support him; were they not the loudest in disapprobation of the resistance made to that power; and did they not join most heartily in all the abuse which was poured out upon the only man who attempted to make that resistance? Upon the occasion of Mr. Madocks's ever-memorable motion of 11th May, 1809, who protected the minister? Who screened

him from inquiry? Who defended him by saying that that which he was accused of was as notorious as the sun at noon day? All this was done by the party who now complain of the duration and extent of his power. Can any disinterested man be sorry for the result, when he reflects on these things? Or, could any man in his senses hope, that the *defenders* of Mr. Perceval, upon the above-mentioned occasions, would proceed upon any principles better than his, unless they were first to pledge themselves to that reform which alone can make a change in the system.

To suppose, that the affairs of the nation could be recovered by a mere change of men is the most monstrous delusion that ever was attempted to be practised upon a people. The war might possibly be better conducted; the quarrel with America might be patched up; the Catholic claims might be granted. But, what then? What would these things do for the country? Would they hasten peace; would they lessen the taxes; would they procure any substantial benefit for the people? No: such benefit is not to be obtained without a change in the system, which system demands an enormous expenditure in order to support it, and an enormous expenditure will have enormous taxes. It is a system of influence and dependence, not a link in the long chain of which can be broken without destroying the whole. The system cannot be supported for a year nor for a month without enormous taxes; and, therefore, to suppose that a mere change of men would be looked upon as a national blessing, or would be eagerly sought for by the people, is a gross absurdity.

It is now asserted, in some of the public prints, that the Catholic question is to be conceded; that, when the Petition comes, it is to take its fair chance; that none of the usual influence is to be employed against it; and, indeed, I do not see why this should not be the case. I do not see why the Catholic Claims should not be conceded without at all affecting the power of the minister. Pitt's power was not affected by his suffering himself to be beaten upon the Negro question. Very much deceived are those who imagine, that Mr. Perceval would be disliked by the Catholics if he were to suffer them to gain their point. Such a supposition is nonsense, because the Catholics would have no grounds for continuing their dislike of him. Their object, their openly professed object, is to obtain a share in the

powers and emoluments of office and their share of votes in the Legislature. If they succeed in this, their struggle is at an end; and I can, for my part, discover no reason whatever for Mr. Perceval's *now* refusing them the share they demand. Their religion is by no means incompatible with "*vigorous*" civil government; nor do I see the smallest reason for him to fear, that Catholic Judges, Catholic Lord Chancellors, Catholic Peers, and Catholic members of the House of Commons would not suit any of his purposes as well as Protestants. As long as the King was in a situation to make the rejection of the Catholic Claims a condition of admission to his counsels there was a quite sufficient reason for Mr. Perceval's strenuous opposition to those claims; but, that reason has now ceased to operate; and, really, I am wholly at a loss for another, especially as the Minister is now in possession of his place to the exclusion of the Prince's former friends; to whom, therefore, the Catholics, if they obtain their point, will not consider themselves as indebted.

The Morning Chronicle, indeed, seeing that this is Mr. Perceval's most vulnerable part, because it is closely connected with the tranquillity and safety of Ireland, labours hard to dissuade the Catholics from placing any confidence in the Minister's reported intentions. This was not necessary; but, if those intentions become manifest, and if they are really acted upon, what more can the Catholics want? Here, then, is a stroke of policy which the Whigs did not expect; and, if struck, it will be a mortal blow to their hopes of successful opposition, which were chiefly, though very foolishly, built upon the discontents of the Catholics, and upon the dangers to which those discontents might give rise. The letter of Lords Grey and Grenville dwells with great emphasis upon this question, which appears to be the great ground of their rejection of the Prince's offer; but, if the claims be now conceded, what will then be the ground of their opposition? They *allude*, indeed, to *other points* of difference; but, the most solid of their grounds would certainly be withdrawn from beneath them by a concession of the Catholic Claims.

Thus would the Whig party be completely foiled in their present apparent views. Those, who *disapprove* of the concession to the Catholics, would excuse the Minister by saying that he was *forced* to give way, and would blame those only

who had forced him; while the disinterested friends of the Catholic claims and the Catholics themselves would be quite satisfied with having obtained the good, and would not be disposed to make much inquiry into the remote causes of their success; and while every man, who has held the opinion that the granting of these claims would tranquillize Ireland and place it in a state of safety, would be compelled to confess, that the Minister had, even at the expence of his own predilections, done all in his power to effect this desirable purpose.

For these reasons, I cannot help thinking that Mr. Perceval will give way, which, observe, would not be at all inconsistent with the Letter of the Prince, which merely says, that he did not sooner express his sentiments as to ministerial arrangements, because it was his "*earnest desire that the expected motion on the affairs of Ireland might undergo the de-liberate discussion of Parliament, unmixed with any other consideration!*" This has been interpreted to mean, that the Prince looked upon the Catholic Question as *finally settled*; but that is a mere *interpretation*. The passage by no means *says* this; nor is there any thing in the Letter to enable one to say, that such is the *necessary conclusion*. It is a sentence without any definite meaning. It left the writer at liberty to grant or withhold his support to the Catholic claims; it gave him time to see what was the effect of words admitting of such an interpretation; it left him a way open to escape from that corner, in which it is manifest the Whigs thought they had hemmed him up. The retreat of the Minister may be somewhat more difficult; but, I dare say, that we shall see him surmount it; and, if he does, the situation of the Whigs, as a party independent of the people, becomes at once completely desperate, there being no other danger sufficiently great and pressing to excite any alarms in their favour.

What will the Whigs *do*, is, then, the question. They will be beaten by the minister; they would, without positive pledges to reform, be rejected with scorn by the people. What will they, then, *do*? It is difficult, perhaps, to say with much chance of precision; but, I cannot refrain from hazarding a conjecture. I am inclined to believe, that the greater part of those, who have been considered as leaders amongst them, are too proud to lay aside that haughtiness, which they have shown

towards the people. They have so long proceeded upon the maxim, that, to admit the people to a participation of power is to undermine their own; and so many of their families would perceive so much danger to their emoluments from a reformed House of Commons, that, in spite of my earnest wishes, I can hardly bring myself to hope, that they will take a popular course. They will, I fear, fold up their arms, and be sulky spectators of the scene; but, as I said last year, "there they may stand till they turn to stone;" for, as long as they are objects of indifference with the people, they will be objects of contempt with the Prince and ministry. If, however, they take this course, there will not be wanting some amongst those, who have hitherto been their followers, to join the popular standard, by which means alone they can hope to be of the smallest weight. Such men can now have no prospect of escaping from complete obscurity, except by pursuing the course which I have here pointed out. Those who are the mere nominees of others will, indeed, follow the example of their patrons; but, all, who are not so, will either go over to the Minister, or will take a decided part with the people; that is to say, will become advocates for a parliamentary reform, whose exertions, if favoured by events, may lead to the accomplishment of that object, which, as it would be a cure for all grievances, is the only one worth contending for.

The part which the *friends of freedom* have to act is too clearly pointed out by reason to be mistaken. They, indeed, have "*no predilections to gratify*" other than those which gratitude call for. They have "*no resentments to indulge*" further than their own safety demand. Neither of those considerations exclude from their confidence any man, who is ready unequivocally to espouse their cause. And, what do they ask for? They are charged with seeking *destruction*; but, is this true? Yes; for they ask for the destruction of corruption; they ask for the destruction of bribery and perjury; they ask for the destruction of those scenes of drunkenness, of fraud, of all sorts of infamies, which, in such numerous instances, disgrace the land; and, if this be really and truly what they ask, what argument can be opposed to their demand, and how scandalous it is to accuse them of wicked designs? The people, however, when called together for the purpose of presenting petitions or remonstrances, will assuredly

have this great object uppermost in their mind; they will take care that reform of parliament shall be the burden of their applications; and, if the packings of party men should upon any occasion overpower them by a majority, the friends of reform will always be able so to divide the Meetings as to baffle the purpose of their opponents, who, they ought never to forget, are as much more dangerous than the ministers themselves as a disguised is more dangerous than an open enemy.

It has been observed, that, upon this occasion, the *people* have shown no spirit? No: "*quite insensible!*" quite dead to all *patriotic* feeling!" This is a mistake of the Whigs. It is their old mistake. The people would be alive enough, if they saw any thing to excite their hopes. If they had seen, in the Letter of Lords Grenville and Grey, that they could not coalesce with the minister, unless they were permitted to propose a reform of that House of Commons, who on the 11th of May, 1809, voted that there should be no inquiry into his conduct as described and offered to be proved at the bar by Mr. Madocks; if the people had seen this, how many petitions would the Prince Regent have had poured in upon him praying for the dismissal of his ministers! Meetings would, by this time, have been called in many of the counties, and in all the cities and large towns in Great Britain. But, as the people saw, in that Letter, nothing to excite in them any hopes of seeing a reform proposed, they saw no ground for their moving, and they have remained unmoved accordingly.

The Whigs may execrate the *apathy* of the people; but that will not further their views. The people care as little for them as they care for the people. If the Whigs call upon them, and reproach them with baseness because they will not stir to ward off the terrible dangers that menace the country; the answer of the people is: "if there be such dangers, who have we to thank for it, but that House of Commons, for asking for a reform of which you have so shamefully calumniated Sir Francis Burdett. If there be no such dangers, all is very well as it is." This is the answer of the people, and it is useless to execrate them for it. It is useless to call them base wretches and to threaten to leave them to be *ruined*. They laugh at all such threats. They are more secure than the great Whigs themselves. For my own part, and I may be supposed to have as little partiality as any body for the present

ministry, I solemnly declare, that, if, by the making of a single dot upon this paper I could put the Whigs in their places, I would not make that dot, unless the Whigs first explicitly pledged themselves to a reform of the Commons' House of Parliament; because I am as certain as I can be of any thing, that without that measure, their entrance into office would be *mischievous* to the country; that it would only tend to delude and cheat the people; and that it would prolong the duration of abuses, 'till all hope of correction by gentle means would vanish, leaving us nothing to look forward to but absolute slavery or recourse to popular violence. I know, that there are some men, and good men too, who, in their eagerness to get rid of the present ministers, are willing to overlook all other considerations. But, this argues a degree of childish impatience. What can such persons promise themselves from the change? Have they observed the conduct of the Whig party upon such questions, for instance, as that of *Ex-Officio Informations*, when not one of the regular party men voted for Lord Folkestone's motion? What, then, have the friends of freedom to expect at their hands, if they come into power independent of the people? Not a man of them voted for Sir Francis Burdett's motion, relative to the Flogging of Soldiers; not a man of them voted for the Address which he moved to the Prince Regent at the opening of this session, though many thousand copies of that Address and the mover's and seconder's speeches have been printed and sold. What, then, I ask, have we to expect from them, unless they first give us their distinct pledges, that they will support a proposition for a reform of the House of Commons, of that very House of Commons, who have approved of all the measures of which they complain as big with national ruin? Without such pledges, it would be madness to expect any thing from them; but, with the pledges, we might expect much. If they give them they have the people for their friends and supporters; and if they refuse them; if they become sulky and fold up their arms, there as I said before, "they may stand 'till they turn to stone." To conclude, if the Whig Lords act upon the sentiment of my Motto, they will possess all the power that the Constitution allows them; if they do not, they will possess none.

WM. COBBETT.

State Prison, Newgate, Wednesday,
26th February, 1812.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

LORD WELLINGTON'S PENSION.—Since my last number was published, there have been some debates in Parliament worthy of the attention of the people. The first that I shall notice is that which took place upon the additional pension of 2,000*l.* a year, proposed to be granted to Lord Wellington for his services in the capture of the city of Rodrigo in Spain. It was recommended by the Prince Regent, and was proposed to the House of Commons on the 21st of February, and was opposed by nobody but SIR FRANCIS BURDETT, who objected to it, as appears from the report of his speech, upon the following grounds: first because the achievement was trifling in its magnitude and especially when compared with the means which the General had at his disposal. Sir Francis said: "He really thought that the test of distinguished merit was to perform great things with inadequate means; but here it was almost impossible to conceive that less should have been done when the means were so ample. (*Hear! hear!*) Gentlemen might cry "*hear! hear!*" but he should be much better pleased to hear their *reasons* than their noise. Their cries were, indeed, marks of disapprobation; but they were nothing more: they certainly contained *no argument*, and might therefore, perhaps, as well be spared. It appeared that Lord Wellington had 54,000 British troops, and 30,000 Portuguese in British pay, who had been characterised as being equal to any troops in the world. Here was an army of 84,000 men; but besides these there were 18,000 said to be in the Portuguese pay; and in addition to all this, there was the Portuguese militia, amounting to 80,000 men: so that his Lordship must have at least 180,000 men in arms, independent of a numerous body of *ordenanza*. Yet, with all this immense force at his command, his Lordship had suffered a French General to perpetrate into Portugal, with an army of 60,000 men; and to maintain himself there till he was at length driven away by famine; and when at length driven away by famine. the French General retreated 300 miles without material loss of any description. When he looked at all this, he could not see any ground for the exulting manner in which the exploits of Lord Wellington had been celebrated."—Then he said,

that, in order to form a just estimate of the campaign, we must inquire what had been the extent of the enemy's successes; because, if it appeared, that, while we were *gaining* in one quarter, we were *losing* in another, the loss must be put against the gain, unless it was our object to go on in a course of self-delusion, and thus treasure up for ourselves grievous and heart-breaking disappointment in the end, than which nothing could be more dangerous to a people in our present situation. Upon this point he is reported to have observed, that, "while he heard with exultation of the bravery displayed by our own troops, he could not forget, that, during this last campaign, SUCHET had sent to France 47,000 prisoners, including Blake and many of the principal Spanish Officers."—He afterwards expressed his doubts as to the utility of the capture of Rodrigo: and, at any rate, he insisted, that, even supposing it proper to give this pension to Lord Wellington, it ought not to come as an additional burthen upon the people, while the government had such ample means of rewarding merit out of funds flowing from other sources; and especially at a time like this, "when the people were driven to extremities by hunger and despair."—These are amongst the reasons, which he gave in opposition to the grant.—He was answered by MR. CANNING, who is reported to have begun by expressing his surprise at the opposition. He denied, that the distresses of particular classes of the people ought to operate as an objection to the grant; and said, that services such as those of Lord Wellington ought not to be paid out of the funds to which Sir Francis had alluded. He next observed, that "the Honourable Baronet had told them, that the military merits of Suchet were greater than those of Lord Wellington, and more calculated to excite the admiration of mankind; but the merits of that French officer, whatever they might be, were not the subject of the present vote; and he was not aware of its being the Honourable Baronet's intention to propose any amendment to the present motion, which should have the effect of substituting the name of Marshal Suchet instead of Lord Wellington. (*A laugh, and cries of hear, hear!*) Even in that case, however, he entertained little doubt that the merits of Suchet would be impartially discussed; but the claims of Lord Wellington were the subject now properly

"before the Committee."—The word *blazon*, as applied to the deeds of Suchet, was found in some of the reports, and by Sir Francis's reply, this appears to have been the case. "He had only contrasted as matters of fact the exploits of Lord Wellington with what had been done by the French General, who in the course of one campaign had sent 47,000 prisoners to France, and had taken Tarragona, Saguntum, and Valencia: and even though Suchet was the enemy of this country, he must be allowed to admire the great military talents which he had displayed. During the same period, we had little else to set off against such signal successes but the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, a town that might be taken three or four times in the course of a campaign, and produce very little effect on the fate of the war. The Right Honourable Gentleman had totally misrepresented him, when he thought fit to hold him up as a BLAZONER of the merit of the French General, and the DEPRESSOR of that of the English one: and the attempt of the Right Honourable Gentleman to place him in such a light was completely unjustifiable."—The venal newspapers, however, have improved upon this, and have called Sir Francis's speech "*infamous*," because it embraced the contrast. But, to what a pass are we come, if we cannot hear truths stated? If our cheeks turn pale at the mention of the deeds of our enemy? This was not formerly the case in England; our forefathers were not afraid to hear the truth spoken even when it tended to our own disadvantage. If the facts, as stated by Sir Francis, had been false; if they had been exaggerated; if the inference drawn from them had been unfair, there would then have been ground for complaint against him; but, then, he would have been answered; then the answer to him would not have consisted of *imputations* of being an admirer of the enemy. How are we to judge of the state of the war in the Peninsula; how are we to judge as to the probability of final success, unless we can bear to hear the truth respecting it; unless we have the courage to hear what makes against us as well as for us? What would any one think of a merchant, who, in an inquiry into the state of his concerns, should obstinately persist in looking only at the credit side of his accounts? Should we not say, either that he was a most despicably weak man; or, that he was

conscious, that, in fact, he was on the verge of insolvency? The achievements of Suchet are well calculated to excite the admiration of mankind. Who can deny it? But, in saying this, does the speaker lower the English army? Does he attempt to undervalue their prowess, especially when he *prefaces his remark with an eulogium upon their valour*; valour, which, as he truly says, they never fail to display, when an occasion offers? What absurdity, what ridiculous pusillanimity, to be afraid to hear the successes of the enemy stated? What good can the suppression of such facts do? What end can it answer but that of creating, first, delusion, and then cruel disappointment? If, indeed, the suppression of a knowledge of the enemy's victories would do the country any good; if it would tend to our safety at home, or our success abroad, then there would be a reason for it; but, we know well that it can have no such tendency, and indeed, no other tendency than that of producing delusion and mortification, and, in the end, infinite mischief. The Jews are described, in the Old Testament, as calling upon their prophets thus: "prophecy to us smooth things; prophecy to us lies." And, what followed? Their overthrow, their degradation, their slavery. If a nation cannot bear *the truth*, its state is precisely like that of an individual who has a similar antipathy.—There are few of my readers, who will not recollect the great pains that have been taken to make us believe, that Buonaparté will not suffer the truth to be made known in France respecting *our successes*; and, I need not remind them, that this has been often cited as a proof of his tyranny. But, if a man is to be looked upon as exulting in the successes of our enemy, because he merely states the fact of those successes, where, in reality, is the practical difference? Buonaparté (if what our prints say of him in this respect be *true*) prevents his subjects from speaking of our successes, by his licensors of the press and by his police. We are attempted to be prevented from speaking of his success by the calumnies, the base assaults of a venal press, which, as to most men, are in the present state of things as efficient as any means that an undisguised despotism can possibly use.—It has been asserted upon innumerable occasions, that the people of France have never heard the truth respecting the *battle of Trafalgar*; and, is it not evident to every

one, that we are indebted to the French papers alone for our knowledge of the truth relative to the *capture of Valencia*, an achievement of far less glory than the former, but of far greater importance as to the result of the war. Is there a man in England who did not look upon it as an act of great meanness (supposing it to have been committed) to disguise the fact of the battle of Trafalgar from the people of France; and if so, how can we attempt to find fault with any one for endeavouring to prevent the real state of the case with regard to the capture of Valencia from being disguised from the people of England?—To endeavour to depress the spirit of a people by false accounts of the successes of their enemies is always reprehensible; but, on the other hand, it is equally reprehensible to endeavour to delude them into false hopes by a series of suppressions of the truth; and, it is, besides, to impute to them tacitly a lamentable want of fortitude and of true courage.—MR. CANNING is reported to have contrasted the smallness of the proposed grant, with the ample rewards, which had been tendered to Lord Wellington by the *Spanish government* and by the *Prince Regent of Portugal*.—"Our allies," he said, "in the Peninsula had not, however, estimated so meanly the services of Lord Wellington. To the title of Conde de Vimiera, the Prince Regent of Portugal had added a pension equal to five thousand pounds a year; to that of Captain General of the Spanish armies, a rank also conferred on his Lordship, pay to a similar amount was attached; and the office of Commander in Chief of the Portuguese forces entitled his Lordship to additional emoluments to nearly the same amount.—There were grounds, therefore, for stating at FIFTEEN THOUSAND POUNDS A YEAR the emoluments which our Allies considered Lord Wellington so justly intitled to receive and here, when it was proposed to add only 2,000*l.* to the annuity which his Lordship already received, an Hon. Bart. holds up his hands, and expresses his opinion, that it is much too great for any services that had been performed. But there was this other consideration to be kept in mind; the rewards which he had already mentioned were offered by foreign gratitude; and their acceptance was declined by Lord Wellington. (*Hear, hear!*) That Noble Lord declared, that it was sufficient for him to

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"perform the duty imposed upon him by his country: that he could not accept of the rewards that were thus proffered him by our allies. Was *this magnanimity* a reason why the House also should adopt the opinion of the Hon. Baronet, and deny all rewards for such services except those feelings which they must necessarily excite?" And he afterwards said, that "it should *never be forgotten*, that his lordship had declined accepting any pecuniary reward from our allies, and had looked to this Country alone to appreciate his services."—Now, as to this point, I must first observe, that all our officers have not seen the offers of foreign governments in the same light; and, that LORD NELSON did actually accept, not only of the title of Duke of Bronté, but of a considerable *estate* attached to it. Therefore, as a point of honour, the refusal of Lord Wellington may admit of some dispute. The other observation that I shall make is this: that the Spanish government has lately been represented as having made a proposition to us for a loan as being necessary even to pay the salaries of the Cortes; and that the Prince Regent of Portugal owes us a sum of money, to pay the interest of which costs the people of this kingdom about forty or fifty thousand pounds a year, paid out of the taxes raised upon them. Under these circumstances every reader, who has a moderate portion of common sense, will be at no loss to judge of the sources, whence the 15,000*l.* a year would have really been drawn, if the offer had been accepted of.—The venal prints have, upon this occasion, as upon that of the Address proposed by Sir Francis Burdett at the opening of the session, done infinite mischief to the cause which they have espoused. They published MR. CANNING's speech, which professed to be an answer to that of Sir Francis, and, was not that enough? Why should they add their foul abuse? They herein discover, that they are uneasy. They say, indeed, that the whole country have reprobated the speech of Sir Francis; but, they at the same time give us convincing proof that they are sure that they are uttering a falshood, because they cannot disguise their anxiety to misrepresent and distort what he said. Men who feel strong in the goodness of the cause they espouse, never resort to these means of hostility against their opponents; they content themselves with fact and argument; but, if they have

neither of these on their side, they must resort to abuse, or they must hold their tongues, the latter of which is quite incompatible with the occupation of a venal writer.—Sir Francis, in the course of his speech, observed, that, in all those parts of Spain, where the French possessed sway, the *Inquisition was abolished*; and, that, in all those parts, where we possessed it, the *Inquisition remained established*; whence he inferred that there could not be much hope of our final success, seeing that the people must naturally abhor the Inquisition. And, what answer has this received? From Mr. Canning he received none at all that I can perceive; and, from the prostituted press, he has received only the old answer, *abuse*, together with the silly observation, that we are fighting "to give the people back *their country*;" as if the French wanted to take the country from the people; as if Buonaparté were such a fool as to wish to conquer a country for the sake of the mere earth, unaccompanied with its inhabitants!

FOREIGN MERCENARIES.—On the 25th instant, on the presenting of the Army Estimates, in the House of Commons, two subjects of debate arose, the first relating to *Foreign Mercenaries*; and the second to *Colonel M' Mahon's sinecure*, the former of which is as much more important than the latter as one thing can well surpass another in importance.—The employing of Foreign Mercenaries in our army, and especially in the heart of our own country, must, sooner or later, become an object of serious and general attention. It will, by-and-by, force itself forward in a way that will not suffer us to get rid of it, until it shall have been fully discussed and settled. We shall find, in the end, that it is of infinitely more consequence to us than all the battles by land or by sea; and, that, compared to it, the war on the Peninsula and in Sicily is a mere trifle. This is a matter that touches us closely; that comes home to our doors. In short, it is a question, upon the final decision of which our all depends.—Therefore, I shall here insert the report (as published in the Morning Chronicle) of the whole that was said upon the occasion above referred to, begging the reader to peruse it with attention; because, unless he do that, the remarks, which I have to offer, cannot be clearly understood.

"LORD FOLKESTONE embraced the opportunity afforded him by the question

“ for bringing up the Report, of requesting
 “ from the Noble Lord (Palmerstone) some
 “ information respecting the *foreign corps*
 “ employed in our service. He was sorry
 “ to observe that the number had been
 “ considerably increased, and within the
 “ last few years had been rapidly aug-
 “ mented. The whole amount of foreign
 “ troops now in the British service was
 “ 30,000 men, and no less than 5,000 had
 “ been added within the short period of
 “ the last year. He was inclined to feel
 “ the more jealousy upon this subject, be-
 “ cause the two last Acts of Parliament,
 “ one of which allowed the introduction
 “ of 10,000, and the other of 16,000 men,
 “ were *both Bills of Indemnity*, brought in
 “ to protect the Government against the
 “ consequences of having acted contrary
 “ to law. There was one point, however,
 “ on which he particularly wished for
 “ some explanation. He understood that
 “ foreign troops had of late been *enlisted*
 “ in *English corps*, and that some Officers
 “ had manifested a desire to recruit their
 “ regiments from French prisoners. He
 “ had been further informed, that the 10th
 “ regiment of light dragoons had been lately
 “ recruited with 118 French prisoners.
 “ Now the question he wished to put to
 “ the Noble Secretary was, whether this
 “ was to be considered as the *act of the*
 “ *Commanding Officer*, whoever that person
 “ might be, or as done under the directions
 “ of the *War Office*? He was not suffi-
 “ ciently conversant in the detail of official
 “ regulations to be satisfied on this point,
 “ but he was ready to maintain, that who-
 “ ever might be the author of the pro-
 “ ceeding, it was altogether illegal.—
 “ (*Hear! hear!*)—The Act of Parliament
 “ which permitted the enlistment of foreign
 “ corps, did not allow the admission of
 “ foreigners into *English corps*. Was this
 “ meant to be denied, and the practice
 “ asserted to be legal; or if not, at whose
 “ instance had the law been transgressed?
 “ He believed likewise, that *foreign officers*
 “ were employed in *British regiments*, not
 “ only as subalterns, but with appoint-
 “ ments on the Staff, and that some actually
 “ commanded troops, which he would as-
 “ sert was directly contrary to an Act of
 “ Parliament. Had not one foreign officer
 “ been even appointed to the command of
 “ a district?

“ LORD PALMERSTONE said, he *believed* a
 “ certain number of foreigners had been
 “ enlisted into the 10th hussars, but they
 “ were not French prisoners *but Germans*.

“ Government had certainly been induced
 “ to sanction their admission into the German
 “ corps, and to this he could not himself
 “ see any objection. He was not aware
 “ of the illegality alluded to by the noble
 “ lord. The 97th regiment originally
 “ consisted entirely of foreigners, and
 “ there was a specific Act of Parliament,
 “ allowing the enlistment. He wished to
 “ know the name of the foreign General
 “ commanding a district according to the
 “ representation of the Noble Lord.

“ LORD FOLKESTONE said, General Baron
 “ Linsingen.

“ LORD PALMERSTONE replied, that he
 “ was not Commander of a district, but
 “ Superintendant of the depot of foreign
 “ troops.

“ LORD FOLKESTONE observed, that with
 “ respect to the Act of Parliament, he
 “ would advise the Noble Lord to read it,
 “ and he would see the construction he
 “ had given to it was correct. He had
 “ derived his information concerning Ge-
 “ neral Linsingen, merely from the Army
 “ List. But the practice of appointing
 “ foreigners at all to the *command of English*
 “ *troops* was in violation of one of the pro-
 “ visions of the *Act of Settlement*.

“ THE HON. W. LAMB confessed he
 “ thought some inquiry necessary, because
 “ this was a favourite topic for POPULAR
 “ PURPOSES, and one which those who
 “ had POPULAR OBJECTS in view,
 “ found it very convenient to use. He
 “ could not, however, but think the con-
 “ duct of the Noble Lord and others
 “ VERY EXTRAORDINARY, in repre-
 “ senting every thing that might be con-
 “ strued into a grievance in its WORST
 “ COLOURS, as if no consideration was
 “ to be had of the *peculiar difficulties*
 “ in the situation of the country. Were
 “ foreigners wantonly introduced, or did
 “ there not exist A SWEEPING AND
 “ OVER RULING NECESSITY FOR
 “ RESORTING TO NEW AND EX-
 “ TRAORDINARY MEASURES, if we
 “ were at all to contend with an enemy
 “ who left no means untried, and who had,
 “ and who exercised the power of FORC-
 “ ING ALL DESCRIPTIONS OF MEN
 “ INTO HIS SERVICE? He doubted not
 “ that in ORDINARY TIMES the Go-
 “ vernment of the country would readily
 “ adhere to the *Act of Settlement*, as a pro-
 “ vision intimately connected with the
 “ safety of the Constitution; but under such
 “ a change of times and circumstances as
 “ was now witnessed, he could not per-

“ceive the propriety of *setting up such complaints.*

“Mr. Horner, Sir F. Burdett and Mr. Curwen rose together, when the Speaker named the latter.

“MR. CURWEN declared that, during the whole of the twenty-five years he had sat in Parliament he had never heard such a doctrine as that of the Honourable Gentleman. (*Hear, hear!*) He had always thought, from all he knew of the history of the country, that the true way of supporting its interests in difficult times was by a strict adherence to the laws. The character of the House and the welfare of the nation had been upheld at such seasons by inspiring the people with confidence and spirits, not by banishing the one and depressing the other. (*Hear!*) At former periods the Government of the country had endeavoured to conciliate the affections and to elevate the hopes of the country by an uniform and scrupulous attention to its fundamental laws and institutions. What was it that the Noble Lord asked for, but that a Bill of Indemnity should, consistent with the practice of the Constitution, be resorted to in these cases, in order that Parliament might be left to judge of the wisdom of the measure. It was this contempt of public opinion which formed one of the principal causes of our present calamities. The opinion of the House itself was equally despised by those men who unhappily continue to have the direction of affairs. There lay the real danger—these were the seeds of real evil. The strength of the country was in its law, not in HIRED ARMIES. He could not see the policy of enlisting prisoners—he could not see the necessity of it, in the well known condition of our manufacturers—he could see no argument to justify it. If he could bring his mind to believe that such measures originated with the Prince Regent himself, he should indeed augur lamentably for the future interests and prospects of the people.

“MR. MATTHEW MONTAGUE was of opinion that such opinions as those of the Honourable Gentleman, could only influence ignorant persons.”

I have inserted what this latter gentleman said, because the time must come when it will be of vital importance to be able to ascertain with precision what every one, who takes part in the discussion of this subject, shall have said.—

With regard to the facts of the constant, though silent increase in the numbers of these Mercenaries, and of the recent enlistments from the Prisons into the 10th (or Prince of Wales's own) regiment of Light Dragoons, they were *not denied* by the Secretary at War; he said that he *believed*, that the enlistments had taken place; So, that he does not seem to have been at all consulted as to the matter; but, the question is, by whose authority has the law been *dispensed with* in this case? And, this is a question, which will, it is to be hoped, by-and-by, receive an answer.—But, though these recruits came out of a prison; though they were prisoners of war, they were, it seems, *not Frenchmen*, but *Germans!* As if this were a circumstance of *palliation!* There is one more objection to them on this account, than there would be if they were Frenchmen; and that is, that they are of a nation, which our enemy has *constantly beaten*; for which reason they are not, one would think, the *better* as soldiers to be opposed to that enemy. Besides, they have, I suppose, taken the oath of *allegiance* or of *fidelity* to that enemy; and, in a moral sense, or even a legal sense, where is the difference as to their conduct?

—However, more of this upon some other occasion. The question never can rest here.—What Mr. LAMB said is worthy of particular notice; because it contains the ground of justification usually resorted to, and affords an opportunity of remarking upon the new notions that have arisen upon the subject of employing foreign mercenaries.—What this gentleman may mean by *popular purposes* and *popular objects* it might be difficult to ascertain; but, if he meant, a desire to show the people, that the party acting was not wholly insensible to the rights and liberties of the people, no man that attempts to check any abuse whatever, can hope to escape such an imputation.—He says, that the thing is painted in its *worst colours*. I can observe no *painting* at all in my Lord Folkestone's speech. I see the facts plainly stated; the law distinctly declared; but I see no more; and, how this can be called *colouring* I am at a loss to discover. Indeed, the thing wants no colouring. Its own native colours are the strongest that it can possibly wear. The facts relating to it are quite sufficient; for that Englishman must be worse than kneaded clod, who will not draw the proper inference.—But, Mr. Lamb tells us, that there is “a sweeping and overwhelming

"necessity for resorting to new and extraordinary measures," and then he cites the example of the French, who, he says, "force all descriptions of men into their service."

—In answer to this, we may first observe, that if there be such a sweeping and overwhelming necessity, whose fault is it, but that of those, who persisted in the war against the Republicans of France? And next, of what nature is the necessity? Why, there is a necessity of having a great military force; but, the question is, whether *this* is the proper way to obtain such a force; whether the force that we obtain in this way be one likely to defend our country in time of need; whether German Officers and soldiers be well calculated for the defence of England against the French; and whether the militias of England, amounting to 300,000 men, would stand in need of such assistance. —However, we have, Mr. Lamb says, the *example of France*. I will, by-and-by, speak of the consistency of referring to that example; but, first, as to THE FACT. In what instance has France set us this example? Did she hire mercenaries to defend her against the coalesced kings of Europe? Is it not, on the contrary, notorious to all the world, that amongst the very first of her acts was the sending away of all the mercenaries whom the Bourbons had in their service, and whom they had long compelled the people of France to pay? It is equally notorious, that these mercenaries were intended to be employed against the National Assembly, before the dethronement of the king; and that it was the regiment of *Royal Allemand*, or *Royal German Regiment*, who were stationed to favour the escape of the king to the place where a camp was to be formed on the confines of France for the purpose of collecting and organizing a force against the makers of that very Constitution which the king afterwards signed and swore to maintain.* —Thus, then,

* The MARQUIS DE BOUILLE, who afterwards acknowledged that he held the Assembly and the people whom they had misled, as he called it, in contempt, indignation, and horror; who told them, that all Europe was about to unite against their "infernal constitution;" who threatened them, that, if they hurt one hair of the heads of any of the Royal Family, he would not leave one stone upon another in Paris; who told them, that he knew all the roads and would lead foreign armies

the example of France, in her hour of peril, does not at all apply. Her conduct was the very reverse of that of employing foreign mercenaries in her defence; she, when attacked by all the powers of Europe, consigned her defence to the arms of her own sons; and, her success is recorded in the discomfiture and fall of her enemies. Therefore, if we are bidden to look to her for an example, we shall, surely, find nothing there to support the notions of Mr. Lamb. —But, perhaps, he did not look so far back. He had his eye upon Buonaparté, "*who forces all descriptions of persons into his service.*" Now, as to this, we know very well, that he has Italians and Germans and Brabanters and Dutch and Hamburgers in his service. But, the fact is, that these are all his *subjects*; they belong to countries that he has conquered, and which countries are at war with us. We need not stop to inquire into his right to conquer these countries any more than to enquire into our right of conquering the Empire of Java. The fact is undoubted; and, as to the force which he employs to put men of various nations in his ranks, if he be enabled to use such force, it is pretty clear that the countries they belong to are under his sway. —The example, however, is still deficient in a most material feature; for, it was not of employing foreign mercenaries *abroad*, that Lord Folkestone complained. It was of employing them here, in this kingdom. It was of giving the *Command of our native troops to foreign officers*. It was of putting *foreigners into our native regiments*. Therefore, until Mr. Lamb be prepared to show, that foreign mercenaries are put into

against it: this man, who planned, as he confessed, that expedition to Montmidi, which proved, in the end, fatal to the House of Bourbon, had selected for the purpose of executing his project, the *Regiment of Royal Germans*, a Battalion of the regiment of *Nassau*, and a regiment of *Swiss*. But, the king having been stopped at Varennes, where there were an officer and some dragoons of a *French* regiment stationed to favour his flight, the officer, wishing to ascertain, whether he could rely upon his men in an attempt to rescue the king, asked them whether they were for the king or the nation, when they exclaimed: "*Vive la nation! Nous tenons et nous tiendrons toujours pour elle!*" That is: "The nation for ever! We do, and all ways will, stand by the nation!"

French regiments; that foreign mercenary officers are set to command French troops; that foreign mercenary officers have staff commands in the departments of France; until he be prepared to show this, I do not think that his argument of example will have any very great weight.

—But, be this as it may, have we not some reason to be surprized, that the example, that *any* example, of Buonaparté should, by those who think him, or represent him to be a despot and a tyrant, be resorted to in defence of a measure which they approve of in our own country. The reader will not have forgotten that Mr. DRAKARD is now in jail for 18 months and is to pay a heavy fine at the expiration of the time, for having written about the treatment of our soldiers; and it will also not be forgotten, that the part of his offence most dwelt upon by his accuser as well as by the judge was his having told his readers how Buonaparté treated his soldiers. Precisely the same was the case as to the crime with which Mr. White was last charged, but of which the jury acquitted him. Yet Mr. Lamb, when complaint is made of something which is said to violate our laws, appeals, in defence of the act, to the example of Buonaparté. Buonaparté employs foreign troops, and, therefore, we may; though, in other cases, it is called *sedition* to cite his example as worthy of our imitation.

—On Mr. Lamb's idea of the Act of Settlement as containing provisions to be adhered to "IN ORDINARY TIMES" I shall make no observation. What Mr. CURWEN said upon that point was quite sufficient; and, here, I cannot help asking Mr. Curwen, that, if he was so much shocked as he appears to have been at the doctrine that he was combatting, who had he to blame for the broaching of that doctrine? It was new and extraordinary to be sure; but, has not the conduct of *the gentlemen of England* been full as extraordinary? Mr. Lamb only defended that which they had tacitly seen done; that of which they had never complained. They have seen great numbers of foreign mercenaries introduced and organized; they have seen foreign officers with Staff Commands in several of the Counties of England; they knew well of the existence of the Act of Settlement; and, if *they*, for so long a time, kept their silence upon the subject, why should Mr. Curwen be surprized to hear the measure openly defended?—If he says, that it is now become time to keep

silence no longer, that is an answer; the best answer that can be given.

W^M. COBBETT.

State Prison, Newgate,

Friday, 28th February, 1812.

Yesterday was published,

FIFTEENTH EDITION,—

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT's ADDRESS to the PRINCE REGENT; as proposed in the House of Commons, at the opening of the Session, on the 7th of January 1812. To which is prefixed his SPEECH on that occasion; with that of Lord COCHRANE, who seconded the Motion.—The Patriotic conduct of the two worthy Representatives of the City of Westminster, on the 7th of Jan. ought to be made known; it has, therefore, been determined to give the Report as large a circulation as possible, at a small expence, that it may be duly appreciated by every man in the United Kingdom.—Printed and published by J. Morton, at the Sunday Review Office, 272, Strand, Price 3d.—The Publisher of this Address begs leave to state to the Public, that upwards of TWENTY-EIGHT THOUSAND Copies have been printed and sold—a convincing proof of the estimation in which the People of the United Kingdom hold the patriotic sentiments it contains.—The FIFTEENTH EDITION was published yesterday, making in the whole THIRTY THOUSAND Copies, a number unprecedented in any publication of a similar nature.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

PORTUGAL.—THE WAR.—*London Gazette Extraordinary.*—Downing Street, December 1, 1811.

(Continued from p. 256.)

..... He preferred the latter, and ascending near the eastern extremity of the ascent, and, which might have been deemed inaccessible, was followed closely by the 28th and 34th regiments; whilst the 39th regiment, and Colonel Ashworth's Portuguese Infantry, followed round the foot of the mountain by the Truxillo road, to take him again in flank. At the same time, Brigadier-Gen. Morillo's Infantry ascended at some distance to the left with the same view.—As may be imagined, the enemy's troops were by this time in the utmost panic; his cavalry was flying in every direction, the infantry threw away their arms, and

the only effort of either was to escape. The troops under Major-General Howard's command, as well as those he had sent round the point of the mountain, pursued them over the rocks, making prisoners at every step, until his own men became so exhausted and few in number, that it was necessary for him to halt and secure the prisoners, and leave the farther pursuit to the Spanish infantry under General Morillo; who, from the direction in which they had ascended, had now become the most advanced; the force General Girard had with him at the commencement, which consisted of 2,500 infantry and 600 cavalry, being at this time totally dispersed. In the course of these operations, Brigadier-General Campbell's brigade of Portuguese infantry (the 4th and 10th regiments), and the 18th Portuguese infantry, joined from Casa de Don Antonio, where they had halted for the preceding night; and as soon as I judged they could no longer be required at the scene of action, I detached them with the brigade consisting of the 50th, 71st, and 92d regiments, and Major-General Long's brigade of cavalry, towards Merida. They reached St. Pedro that night, and entered Merida this morning; the enemy having, in the course of the night, retreated from hence in great alarm to Almendralego. The Count de Penne Villamur formed the advanced guard with his cavalry, and had entered the town previous to the arrival of the British.—The ultimate consequences of these operations I need not point out to your Lordship; their immediate result is the capture of one General of Cavalry (Brune,) one Colonel of Cavalry (the Prince D'Arembergh), one Lieutenant-Colonel, (Chief of the Etat Major,) one Aide-de-Camp of General Girard, two Lieutenant-Colonels, one Commissaire de Guerre, thirty Captains and inferior officers, and upwards of 1,000 of non-commissioned officers and soldiers, already sent off under an escort to Portalegre: the whole of the enemy's artillery, baggage, and commissariat, some magazines of corn, which he had collected at Caceres and Merida, and the contribution of money which he had levied on the former town, besides the total dispersion of Gen. Girard's corps. The loss of the enemy in killed must also have been severe; while that on our side was comparatively trifling, as appears by the accompanying return, in which your Lordship will lament to see the name of Lieutenant-Strenuwitz,

Aide-de-camp to Lieut.-General Sir William Erskine, whose extreme gallantry led him into the midst of the enemy's cavalry, and occasioned his being taken prisoner.—Thus has ended an expedition, which, although not bringing into play to the full extent the gallantry and spirit of those engaged, will, I trust, give them a claim to your Lordship's approbation. No praise of mine can do justice to their admirable conduct; the patience and good-will shewn by all ranks during forced marches in the worst of weather; their strict attention to the orders they received; the precision with which they moved to the attack; and their obedience to command during the action; in short, the manner in which every one has performed his duty from the first commencement of the operation, merits my warmest thanks; and will not, I am sure, pass unobserved by your Lordship.—To Lieutenant-General Sir William Erskine, I must express my obligations for his assistance, and advice upon all occasions; to Major-General Howard, who dismounted and headed his troops up the difficult ascent of the Sierra, and throughout most ably conducted his column; and to Major-General Long, for his exertions at the head of his brigade, I feel myself particularly indebted. I must also express my obligations to Col. Wilson, Col. Ashworth, and Lieut.-Col. Stewart, commanding brigades, for the able manner in which they led them; Lieut.-Col. Cameron, the Hon. Lieut.-Col. Cadogan, the Hon. Lieut.-Col. Abercromby, and Lieut.-Cols. Fenwick, Muter, and Lindsay, Majors Harrison and Bussche, Major Parke, commanding the Light Companies, and Captain Gore, commanding the 9th Light Dragoons, Major Hartmann, commanding the artillery, Lieut.-Col. Grant and Major Birmingham of the Portuguese service, Capt. Arresaga of the Portuguese artillery, whose guns did so much execution, severally merit my warmest approbation by their conduct; and I must not omit to mention the exertions made by Brigadier-General Campbell and his troops, to arrive in time to give their assistance.—General Giron, the Chief of General Castanos's staff, and second in command of the 5th Spanish army, has done me the honour to accompany me during these operations; and I feel much indebted to him for his assistance and valuable advice.—Brigadier-General the Count De Penne Villamur, Brigadier-General Morillo, Colonel

Downie, and the Spanish officers and soldiers in general, have conducted themselves in a manner to excite my warmest approbation.—To Lieut.-Col. Rooke, Assistant-Adjutant-General, and Lieut.-Col. Offney, Assistant-Quarter-Master-General, for the able manner in which they have conducted their departments; and also for the valuable assistance and advice which I have at all times received from them; to the officers of the Adjutant and Quarter-Master-General's departments; to Captain Squire, of the Royal Engineers, for his intelligence and indefatigable exertions during the whole operation; and to Captain Currie and my personal Staff, my warmest thanks are due.

This dispatch will be delivered to your Lordship by Captain Hill, my First Aide-de-camp, to whom I beg to refer your Lordship for all farther particulars.—I have the honour to be, &c.

R. HILL, Lieut.-General.

To General Viscount Wellington.

P. S. Since writing the above report, a good many more prisoners have been made; and I doubt not but the whole will amount to 13 or 1,400.—Brigadier General Morillo has just returned from the pursuit of the dispersed, whom he followed for eight leagues. He reports, that besides those killed in the plain, upwards of 600 dead were found in the woods and mountains.—General Girard escaped in the direction of Serena, with 2 or 300 men, mostly without arms, and is stated by his own aide-de-camp to be wounded.

Return of Killed, Wounded, and Missing, of a Corps of the Army, under the command of General Viscount Wellington, K. B. Commander of the Forces, under the immediate orders of Lieut.-Gen. R. Hill, engaged with the French near Arroyo del Molino, on the 28th of October, 1811.

Total British loss.—7 rank and file, 5 horses, killed, 1 Lieut.-Colonel, 2 Majors, 4 Captains, 4 Serjeants, 47 rank and file, 11 horses, wounded: 1 General Staff missing.

Total Portuguese loss—6 rank and file wounded.

Names of Officers wounded and missing on the 28th of Oct. 1811.

Wounded.

2d Hussars, King's German Legion—Major Bussche and Captain Schultze, slightly.

2d Batt. 39th Foot—Captain Saunderson, severely.

1st Batt. 92d Foot—Lieut.-Col. Cameron, slightly; Captain Donald M'Donald, severely; Captain John M'Pherson, severely, but not dangerously; Brevet Major Dunbar, slightly.

Missing.

21st Light Dragoons—Lieutenant Strenuwitz, Aide-de-Camp to Lieut.-General Sir William Erskine, Bart.

Return of Ordnance and Stores taken from the Enemy.

1 French six-inch howitzer; 1 French eight-pounder gun; 1 French four-pounder gun; 5 caissons, with gun and howitzer ammunition; 1 caisson, with small arms ammunition; 1 Store-waggon.

AMERICAN STATES.—Correspondence between Mr. Foster and Mr. Monroe, and also between Mr. Monroe and Mr. Serurier, laid before Congress in January, 1812.

Mr. Foster to Mr. Monroe, Dec. 17, 1811.

SIR—I did not mean to have written to you at this moment on the subject of our late correspondence, but that I have had the mortification to perceive statements, circulated from highly respectable sources, which give a view of the pretensions of Great Britain relative to the United States not warranted by any of the letters which I had the honour to address to you, and which at a time when discussions are continuing so important to the two countries, might, if left unrectified, produce an effect highly to be lamented by both the American and British Governments, inasmuch as by creating unnecessary irritation, they might throw obstacles in the way of a restoration of a friendly understanding between them.—I find it asserted in the statement referred to, that I have, in the name of my government, demanded that the United States government should pass a law for the introduction of British goods into the American ports, and also that the United States should undertake to force France to receive into her harbours, British manufactures.—I beg permission, Sir, to declare that neither of these demands have been made by me, and that my meaning must not have been understood, if such was conceived to have been its import. I could not have demanded the passage of such a law as above stated, because my government does not pretend to interfere with the internal

Government of a friendly power, nor did I mean to demand that America should force France to receive our manufactures.

All I meant to say was, that the admission of French commerce while that of England has been excluded from the United States ports, was regarded by Great Britain as highly unfriendly in America, and that a continuation of such policy would be retaliated upon by Great Britain with similar restrictions on her part, which was so far merely an offering of like for like. But while the American non-importation act excludes British trade from the United States ports, it must be recollected that it goes still farther, and excludes also British armed ships from American ports, while it admits those of the enemies of Great Britain. A neutral nation is responsible for the equality of its rules of conduct towards the belligerent powers (to use the words of an American Secretary of State in the year 1796,) and therefore the part of the law which establishes an inequality was justly an object of more serious complaint on the part of Great Britain. You are aware, Sir, of the advantages which his Majesty's enemies have derived from this state of inequality, which enables them, though possessing no port in this hemisphere, continually to prey on the trade of his Majesty's subjects, secure of a refuge for their cruizers and prizes.—The prohibition of entry to his Majesty's ships under these circumstances might perhaps justify Great Britain in asserting that whatever reason she may have for repealing or modifying her Orders in Council, so as to lessen or entirely remove the pressure now unavoidably laid on the trade of America as a neutral nation, she might yet refuse to enter into any discussion on that subject with the United States, until either by the revocation of the prohibition above stated, or the placing all the belligerents under the same prohibition, America should cease to violate the duties of a neutral nation.—With respect, however, to the supposed demand that America should force the entry of British manufactures into France, it is most particularly necessary that I should explain myself, as a total misconception appears to have taken place upon this point. The question of

retaliation on the French Decrees is directly one between England and France. In consequence of the extraordinary blockade of England, we have in our defence been obliged to blockade France, and prohibit all trade in French articles in return for the prohibition by France of all trade in English articles. This measure of retaliation, it is wished, should operate on France alone, but from the trade carried on with France by America, it unavoidably operates also on her: it is a measure to destroy the French trade in return for the similar measure of France on which it is retaliatory, and its acting on neutrals is an incidental effect of it, consequent upon the submission of neutrals to the original measures of the enemy against Great Britain. It is indeed melancholy, that the unnatural situation of Europe should produce such a result, but I cannot see how this can be considered as a war on American commerce, when all other American trade but that which is carried on with our enemy's ports in defiance of a blockade authorised by the law of retaliation, is unaffected by it.—We complain that America does not resist the regulation of the Berlin and Milan Decrees, an object to permitting the French to trade with her during the continuance against the commerce of England, but this is not exacting as has been represented, that America should force British manufactures into France: it is pursuing only a just course of retaliation on our enemy. If America wishes to trade with France, if French commerce is of importance to her, we expect she should exact of France to trade with her as she has a right to demand in her quality of neutral; but if she does choose to exercise this right, all we ask is, that she should abstain from lending her assistance to the trade of France, and not allow her commerce to be a medium of undermining the resources of Great Britain.—I have thought it necessary thus to endeavour to set these two points in their true light; the repeal of the law was asked, as being an unfriendly measure, partial in its operation against Great Britain, and a prospect of retaliation was held out on its commercial operation if continued.

(To be continued.)